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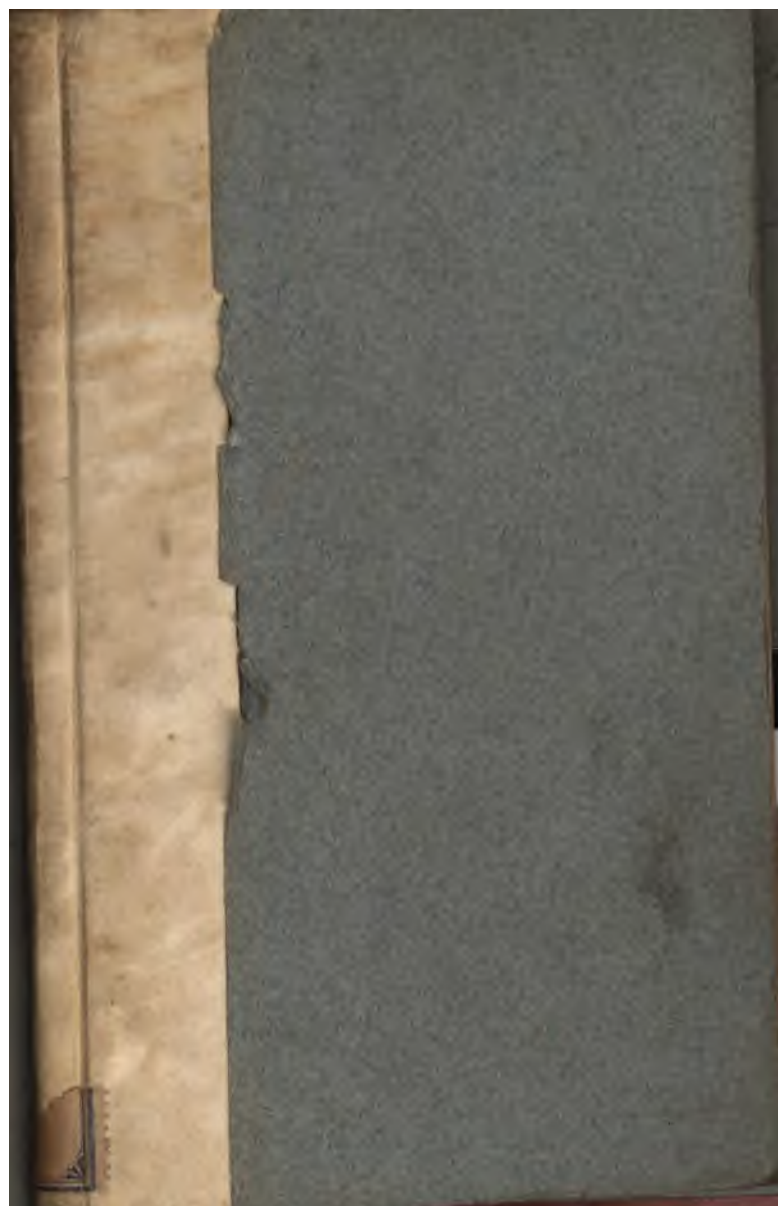
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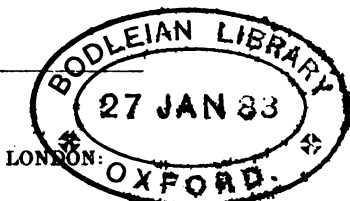


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**A VISIT**  
**TO**  
**JERUSALEM**  
**AND THE HOLY PLACES ADJACENT,**  
**INCLUDING A JOURNEY TO**  
**THE RIVER JORDAN AND THE DEAD SEA;**  
**WITH**  
**MEDITATIONS**  
**ON**  
**THEIR HISTORY AND RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES,**

**BY C. B. WALK.**



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## PREFACE.

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The Holy Land is highly interesting, from being the situation where the circumstances recorded in the Scriptures really happened, and it increases our attention on the subject when we reflect that our blessed Saviour was born in these regions, and exercised his divine mission in his native country and its immediate vicinage.

PALESTINE is situated on the coast of the Levant Sea, the eastern part of the Mediterranean; the term Levant literally meaning the eastern part of any sea or continent on which the sun rises. The soil and climate of this country were once famed for their salubrity and fertility, and were remarkable for the excellence of the corn, vines, olives, figs, dates, and various kinds of delicious fruits, and many other valuable commodities. It is reasonable to imagine that the inhabitants of this distinguished country enjoyed the blessings of abundance from the natural produce; besides which they had opportunities of obtaining many important useful things from the Tyrians and Sidonians, who were famed for their extensive commerce with all the regions of the known world.

Palestine, however, now exhibits nothing more than a dreary wilderness or a gloomy burying ground. When travelling here, the situations, views, and circumstances which press in swift succession on the pious and intelligent mind are calculated to call up the most lively sensations of gratitude.



when considering its distinguished blessings in ancient days; and commiseration when viewing its present gloomy and melancholy contrast. Its cities so celebrated by the ancients for their wealth and splendour, many of them are now reduced to a mere heap of ruins; the palaces once inhabited by powerful and voluptuous princes are razed to their foundations, and levelled with the ground. And the superb temples once the wonder of the world, and whose ruins still astonish the traveller, are become a retreat for bats and owls; and their grand pavement, so often swept by the embroidered robes of the superb ladies of the east, are now the haunts of venomous serpents, and retreats for the savage inhabitants of the desert.

There is a melancholy reflection arising on the mind, on the view of deserted habitations; we are insensibly bewildered in pursuing the fancied causes of migration, whether we attach to ourselves the fallen fortunes of grandeur, or partake the hard fate of the wandering cottager. The idea heightens when we remember that such also will be our case. Life is only a dream, the rich live only to labour after pleasure, and the poor man lives to labour for his daily bread, both heavily loaded with the cares of human life. In a few days, however, it will all be at an end. The learned will be released from the imprisonment of the study, and the merchant from the distractions of commerce; their splendid homes will be forsaken, and they will become inhabitants of the silent tomb. The weary peasant shall lay aside his toil, and take up his long home under the grassy turf. The breezes of spring shall murmur piteously over us, the summer trees will bend their flowery heads, the autumn leaves will rustle amongst the tombs, the winter's storm shall hollow frightfully from the mountains;—but these will excite no joy and menace no evil. Like others that have gone before us, we shall be buried in silent oblivion.

## CHAPTER I.

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### JOURNEY FROM JAFFA, OR JOPPA, THROUGH RAMAH, TO JERUSALEM..

We left the Island of Cyprus with a favourable wind, which on the second day brought us over against St. John d'Acri, the Ptolemais of the ancients. The third day we passed through Caipha, lying under the north part of Mount Carmel; and on the summit of the mountain, saw the ancient Carmelite convent, and on its slope the supposed house of Elias. Caipha lies low on the sea coast, almost opposite to St. John d'Acri.

In the afternoon we passed by Il Castro Pellerine, of which we could plainly see the remaining ruins. At this place the pilgrims were accustomed to land, it having then a kind of harbour, now no longer in being. The sea here to some distance is full of shoals.

On the morning of the fourth day, we passed by Alzulo, a tower on a hill, and by the sailors called the tower of Bethlehem. Near this tower are several ruins, and up the country a small village. About noon we had the satisfaction to come to anchor at the distance of half a mile from *Jaffa*; the reason of ships lying to at this di

tance from the town is the bad state of the harbour; formerly here was a dock or bason, which reached to the town itself, and also a large arsenal; but at present every thing lies in ruins.

This town, anciently called Joppa, some suppose to be more ancient than the Deluge, affirming that it was the place where Noah lived, and built his ark, and entered it together with his family; for information on this head, I must refer my readers to Pliny, Pomponius Mela, and Vossius. Others, on the contrary, maintain that the town was never in being till built by Japhet, Noah's son. However antiquaries may settle these difficulties, it was unquestionably the place where the prophet Jonah embarked for Nineveh on his divine mission for preaching repentance to its inhabitants; and where St. Peter restored Tabitha to life; it was likewise, in ancient times, the only seaport in all Judea; and to this place Solomon ordered the cedars of Lebanon to be brought for building the temple at Jerusalem. This city has been several times pillaged and destroyed. For besides Gestius and Judas Maccabæus, the emperor Vespasian totally demolished it, as being a nest of pirates; and even caused a large fortress to be erected to keep the adjacent country in awe. In more modern times it suffered the same fate from one of the Soldans of Egypt; and was subsequently destroyed by the *Saracens*, that it might be no longer a receptacle for *Christian ships*.

At present Jaffa resembles a village rather than a town; most of its inhabitants are Arabians, and live in extreme poverty, except those concerned in the manufactories of soap and cotton.

Soon after landing, having arranged about my luggage and procured a horse, I set out for Ramah, in company with two Greek pilgrims who were going to Jerusalem. The distance from Jaffa to Ramah is computed at twelve miles.

We first passed over one of the most beautiful plains imaginable, but of which only a small part near Jaffa is in a state of cultivation. This plain extends itself as far as the eye can reach, and is by the prophet Isaiah called Sharon, from a town which formerly stood here. Many are of opinion that this is the very plain in which Joshua defeated the five kings, when at his invocation the sun stood still, and the moon stayed. About two miles from Jaffa we came to a small village, lying in the midst of ruins, and a little beyond it passed through a large grove of olive trees, which contrary to the custom of the country were planted with some regularity; on our left hand we saw a large mosque, with no less than nine cupolas, and soon after arrived near Ramah.

Ramah, by the Turks called Ramlee, lies in a large plain, and its neighbourhood is extremely pleasant, especially in spring, before the great heats come on. Some suppose that this was the country of Joseph of Arimathea.

At present it is without walls, and looks more like an overgrown village than a city. The houses are very mean, most of them of but one story, and the doors designedly low, that the Arabians may not enter on horseback: the walls are extremely thick, for the better keeping out the heat of the sun, which would otherwise be quite insupportable.

The town is chiefly inhabited by Turks, Arabians, and likewise Greeks, who understand no other tongue but the Arabic.

We put up at the convent of the fathers of the Holy Land, founded by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy; it is handsomely built, after the style of this country, with neat terraces or flat roofs, whence there is a view over the whole city and the neighbouring country. It has also a small church, which, according to the traditions of the fathers, stands on the foundation of Joseph of Arimathæa's house.

Without the tower we likewise saw the ruins of a church said to have been built by the empress Helena, in memory of the forty martyrs killed in Armenia, whose bodies are here deposited; and from this circumstance it is called the church of the forty martyrs. The tower, which is square, is still entire, though said to have been formerly as high again; but on a close inspection the church appears with greater probability to be a structure of modern times, *and to have been built by the French when in possession of Jerusalem.* You ascend this

steeple by a hundred and twenty steps, formed of a stone equally hard and beautiful. The church is of Gothic architecture, and from the remains, which consist of lofty arched aisles and cloisters, it must once have been both large and stately. The Turks have made an oratory of part of it; and in the centre, where formerly stood the choir, have built a small mosque; wherever they have done this there is no recovering such churches out of their hands. In the immediate neighbourhood are two subterraneous cavities supported by arches, intended probably for reservoirs; though some suppose that they served for places of religious meeting.

Having spent one day at Ramah we proceeded to Jerusalem. On our way we saw a whole town, anciently called Liddua, in ruins, except a church, dedicated to St. George, the conqueror of the dragon; though, by the way, this story of St. George and the dragon, according to Baronius and many other writers, is to be accounted merely emblematic; if not indeed altogether derived from the fable of Andromeda, who at Joppa was delivered by Perseus from the sea monster to which she was exposed.\*

Soon after leaving Ramah the country appeared in a desolate state, and that seemingly from want of cultivation. The natural features of the surrounding country were very irregular; the plains in some parts were covered with

\* *Viri. Reland. Palest. Illustr. Lib. III. p. 86A.*

verdure, and in others exhibited nothing but a barren waste; the steep and rocky mountains whose wild and rugged tops bounded the margin of the horizon forming a grand outline of dark and barren ridges. Below this the eye could distinguish here and there some scanty vegetation and a few mantling vines. The present desolate state of this country appears almost incredible when viewed in contrast with its primitive glory and renown; language is inadequate to describe what the mind feels when contemplating those regions, once so highly favoured. Here the eternal Jehovah once smiled propitiously on the works of his own creation; here, in ancient days, the flocks and herds, amply provided for by the bountiful hand of the God of nature, surrounded the well of water. The horse roved majestically over the turf, shaking his flowing mane, and neighing as he went in praise of his maker. Countless myriads of beings, infinitely varied in form and in beauty, fluttering on variegated wings soared aloft and sported in the flowery meadows; and the woods resounded with the songs of innumerable birds, warbling amidst the foliage of the trees. But now all that is to be seen, are here and there a few forsaken trees shaking their lonely heads, and a few miserable looking birds of prey, which seem loaded with melancholy as they soar along. The cooing of the harmless dove is heard no more, and the sweet song of *the linnet* has long since become mute, and the

melodious warbling of the bird of paradise has given place to the hoarse croaking of the raven and the scream of the eagle. Art has long left, and even nature seems loth to do her part.

A little on the left we observed a village half in ruins, and likewise the rudera of large structures: this place is called Il bon Ladron, or the good robber, from a notion that the penitent thief, who was crucified with our Saviour, lived here.

Not far from hence, among the mountains, we left on our right hand a village of very wretched appearance, with the ruins of a convent and church dedicated to St. Jeremiah; and from this the village derives its name of Jeremiah; and not, as others say, from being the birth place of that prophet. The land about this village is very well cultivated, and watered with excellent springs; and the whole mountain where we then were had a fertile appearance, the corn growing, in great abundance, even among the stones. We also saw, from the ruins of several places, sufficient indications that they were of Genoese origin.

A small distance further we saw, on the right hand, near the summit of a mountain, a village, with the appearance of a castle, and by the Arabians called Modin. This is supposed to be the burial place of the Maccabees; and it was no small vexation that we could not visit it for further information, especially as, according to the first book of the Maccabees, their monu-



ments must have been very superb. On the same road, but a little further, is still existing a village, called Cubbeil, thought to be the ancient Emmius. After passing a bridge we came into a valley, called the valley of Bitumen very famous in these parts for David's victory over Goliath.

At length along a very stony and troublesome way, we came in sight of the celebrated city of Jerusalem.

I shall never forget the effect that the first sight of the walls of that memorable place had on me; memory fled back on rapid wings to ages that are gone, and days of other years, and fancy gave rise to various emotions.

The sublime and pathetic songs of king David, accompanied by the moral preaching of Solomon, all darted upon the mind with gigantic grandeur, and powerfully overwhelmed my thoughts. I wondered in contemplation, ruminating on the number of ages that had passed away, and the many fellow mortals that had been consigned to the silent dust, and not a vestige of them could now be traced. Even Solomon and all his glory is vanished like a breath of empty air. While I gazed on this holy city, where the greatest of earthly grandeur ever appeared, I could not help feeling my own insignificance in the creation; I shrunk back upon myself. The worm under my feet ceased to be an object of contempt, and I dared not deny our mutual *affinity*. *Like an atom on the face of the earth,*

my knowledge only extends to an imperfect acquaintance with the spot on which I move ; my period of existence is limited to a moment ; my sphere of action is a point.

As we approached, the lofty hills by which it is surrounded give to the city itself an appearance of elevation beyond what it really possesses. All the adjacent country has a wild and barren aspect, consisting of bare, arid, and white rocks, of a calcareous substance ; except on the side of Bethlehem, where the soil is fruitful and well cultivated.

We were now arrived at the gate called Bethlehem ; on entering the venerable city, my mind was impressed with a powerful awe, amounting to melancholy ; and I felt an indescribable reverence for every mouldering stone.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when we entered, and we went immediately to the convent of the fathers of the Holy Land ; where we were extremely well received and entertained ; there being always a brother appointed to receive any pilgrims, and to act as their guide in visiting the curiosities of the city.

## CHAPTER II.

## A WALK IN THE STREETS OF JERUSALEM.

This ancient capital of Judea, once renowned for the splendour of its monarchs, the sumptuous magnificence of its temple, and the pomp of its worship, exhibits at present no remains of the city, as it existed in our Saviour's time, or as it was afterwards rebuilt by the emperor Adrian. With respect to its present state, it is about three miles in circumference, and thinly inhabited; the walls are weak, and without bastions, and the ditch inconsiderable: the gates are six in number, viz. Damascus, St. Stephen's, Herod's Sterquelina, Bethlehem, and Mount Zion, besides the golden gate, which is shut up on account of a prophecy which the Turks have among them, that by this gate the Christians are to take the city. There is much to be seen at Jerusalem besides its monks and monasteries, much to repay pilgrims, of a very different description from those who usually resort thither, for all the fatigue and danger that they must encounter. At the same time, to me, interested in tracing within the walls antiquities referred to in sacred history, no sight can be more mortifying *than the city in its present state.* The

mistaken piety of the early Christians, in attempting to preserve, either confused or annihilated the memorials it endeavoured to perpetuate. On viewing the havoc they have made, it may now be regretted that the Holy Land was ever rescued from the dominions of the Saracens; far less barbarous than their conquerors. The absurdity of hewing the rocks of Judea into gilded chapels, and of disguising the face of nature with painted domes, and marble coverings, by way of commemorating the scenes of our Saviour's life and death, is so evident and so lamentable, that it has not escaped the reprehension of travellers, no way remarkable for their attachment to Christianity.

Mount Calvary has sunk beneath the overwhelming influence of superstition, studiously endeavouring to modify and disfigure it, through so many ages; the situation of Mount Zion yet remains to be ascertained; but the Mount of Olives, undisguised by fanatical labours, exhibits the appearance it presented in all the periods of its history. From its elevated summit, almost all the principal features of the city may be discerned; and the changes that eighteen centuries have wrought in its topography may perhaps be ascertained. The features of nature continue the same though works of art have been done away; the beautiful gate of the temple is no more, but Siloa's fountain yet flows, and Kedron sometimes murmurs in the valley of Jehosaphat.

The hill which now bears the name of Zion is situated upon the south side of Jerusalem, part of it being excluded by the wall of the present city, which passes over the top of the mount. If this be indeed Mount Zion the prophecy of Micah, that the plough should pass over it, has been fulfilled to the letter, for such labours were actually going on when we passed.

The houses of Jerusalem are heavy square masses, very low, without chimneys or windows; they have flat terraces or domes on the top, and look like prisons or sepulchres. The whole would appear to the eye one uninterrupted level, did not the steeples of the churches, the minarets of the mosques, the summits of a few cypresses and the clumps of nopals, break the uniformity of the plain. On beholding these stone buildings, encompassed by a stony country, you are ready to enquire if they are not the confused monuments of a cemetery, in the midst of a desert.

In the exterior of the city you lose yourself among narrow unpaved streets, here going up hill, there down, from the irregularity of the ground, and you walk among clouds of dust or loose stones; canvas stretched from house to house increases the gloom of the labyrinth, bazars roofed over, and fraught with infection, completely exclude the light from the desolate city. A few paltry shops expose nothing but wretchedness to view, and even these are frequently shut, from apprehension of the passage of a *cadi*. Not a creature is to be seen in the

streets, nor a creature at the gates, except now and then, a peasant gliding through the gloom, and concealing under his garments the fruits of his labour, lest he should be robbed of his hard earnings by the rapacious soldiers. Aside in a corner, the Arab butcher is slaughtering some animal suspended by the legs from the wall; from his haggard and ferocious looks and his bloody hands, you would rather suppose that he had been cutting the throat of a fellow creature than killing a lamb. The only noise heard from time to time in this desolate city is the galloping of the steed of the desert: it is the janissary, who brings the head of the Bedouin or returns from plundering the unhappy Fellah.

Here the mind is powerfully impressed with the pathetic lamentations of Jeremiah:—

“They hunt our steps that we cannot go in our streets, they are swifter than the eagle of the heaven, they pursued upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness. How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces! Her tears are on her cheeks, among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her, all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies. And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed: her princes are become like harts that find no pasture, and they are gone without strength before the pursuer. *Jerusalem* remembered in the days of her affliction.

tion and of her miseries, all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her : her adversaries saw her, and did mock : all that passed by shook their heads, saying, is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth ? How is the gold become dim, how is the most fine gold changed ! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street, the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness. The elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their music ; the joy of our heart is ceased, our dance is turned into mourning, the crown is fallen from our head ; for this our heart is faint, for these things our eyes are dim. Because of the mountain of Zion which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it. But thou, O Lord, remainest for ever, thy throne is from generation to generation."

In passing near the site of the ancient temple I beheld a tribe cut off from the rest of the inhabitants of the city, the particular objects of every species of degradation. These people bow their heads without murmuring ; they endure every kind of insult without demanding justice ; they sink beneath repeated blows without sighing : if their head be required, they present it to the scimitar. On the death of any member of this proscribed community his companion goes at night and *enters him by stealth* in the valley of Jehosaphat. *Enter the abodes* of these people you will find

them, amidst the most abject wretchedness, instructing their children to read a mysterious book, which they, in their turn, will teach their offspring to read. What their fathers did four thousand years ago these people still continue to do. Seventeen times have they witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem, yet nothing can discourage them ; nothing can prevent them from turning their faces towards Zion. To see the Jews scattered over the whole world, according to the word of God, must doubtless excite surprise, but to be struck with supernatural astonishment you must view them at Jerusalem ; you must behold these rightful masters of Judea living as slaves and strangers in their own country ; you must behold them expecting under all oppressions a king who is to deliver them. Crushed by the cross that condemns them, and is planted on their head ; skulking near the temple, of which not one stone is left upon another, they continue in their deplorable infatuation.

The Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, are swept from the earth, and yet a petty tribe whose origin preceded that of all those great nations still exists unmixed among the ruins of its native land. If any thing among the nations wears the character of a miracle, that character in my opinion is here legibly impressed. What an abject state does this country now exhibit, contrasted with its ancient prosperity ! In the very place where these ancients once reigned, and enjoyed equal laws, and the blessings of civiliza-



tion ; where agriculture and all kinds of industry were encouraged ; arts and sciences flourished, and liberty was understood and enjoyed.

Now we behold their descendants reduced to wretched servitude and degradation ; few effectual laws to bind equally king and people, the governors and governed ; little protection of property, or stimulus to industry ; few golden harvests, fruitful vineyards, or smiling vales. But pride, ignorance, indolence and other degrading passions and dispositions display their baneful effects in the poverty, misery, and ignorance of the oppressed. The mind is impressed with the distressing idea, and ready to plunge into the labyrinth of conjecture, Why is it so ? Why are these interesting regions so deeply sunk in superstition and error ? Nations as well as individuals have their age, their rise, their glory and decline. What astonishing changes have taken place in the various countries on the face of the earth. One kingdom has fallen, and another been raised on its ruins. One prince has been put down and another set up. One ruler has been circumvented by fraud and another expelled by force. One people has groaned under the horrors of war, another pined under the pressure of famine ; while others have languished under the ravages of pestilence. *The tongue that once commanded all the charms of harmony and all the powers of eloquence in this land, has forgot its cunning. Where are now those strains of melody which*

ravished every ear ; where is that flow of persuasion which carried captive the judgment ; the great master of language and of song is become silent as the night that surrounds him. Families, states, empires, and churches, have their rise, their glory, and decline. The world is a vast theatre in which every one appears his moment on the stage, and in a moment disappears. Every successive instant presents different scenery and a new decoration. All things under the sun are mortal. Cities and empires are so ; and the time will come when it shall be a question where they were, and perchance whether they had a being or not. Some will be destroyed by war, others by luxury, fire, inundations, or earthquakes. All things are subject to decay ; they begin, they increase, and they die ; the heavens and the earth wax old, and even their periods are appointed.

### CHAPTER III.

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#### ACCOUNT OF THE EASTER CEREMONIES AT JERUSALEM, WITH THE JOURNEY OF THE PILGRIMS TO THE RIVER JORDAN.

On the Friday before Easter I was informed that a number of ecclesiastics were in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, celebrating the service of that solemnity. Being curious to witness these ceremonies, I hurried away; and though the church doors were locked, yet, by virtue of money, I procured admission. I entered the building through a small door, which first leads into a large court, with the church gate directly in front; on the left hand is the Greek convent, with a tower built in the Gothic style, but not so high as it was formerly; neither are there now any bells, though once noted for having eighteen. In this area are four pedestals or pillars, and possibly there might have been a portico of many more such. On the right hand are several chapels, as those of the Blessed Virgin, and Mount Calvary. Near this place are three doors, the first leading to the Gothic chapel, the second to an Armenian chapel, and through the third you ascend to a Greek church; in which is still shewn the

place where Abraham attempted to sacrifice his son Isaac.

The gate of the church itself is in the Gothic style, without any regularity in its construction; its entrance is always guarded by a Turk, to whom the Pacha farms it; generally for no less than one hundred piasters per annum; and this sum is made up with good interest by paras, or pennies, exacted from the pilgrims.

In the door, or entrance of the church, are large holes or openings, through which provisions are handed to those within while it is locked; the Turks always carrying the keys with them, and opening it only at stated times. This door is embellished with five marble pillars, of different colours, but of little architectural beauty. In one of the pillars on the left hand, is a fissure, occasioned, as they tell you, by the bursting out of the sacred fire, when a Jew with a large sum, bribed the Turks not to allow the Christians to celebrate the Holy Feast any more. To this likewise there hangs another tale, intimating that no Jew on pain of death is to set his foot within the area of the church. One observes along the capital of the gate several basso relievos of passages in our Saviour's life; as his entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday; his Crucifixion, &c. &c., but of very ordinary execution. On the left hand of this gate is likewise a door, but at present walled up; at the entrance of the church are *two large Corinthian columns, remains of the*

old building now within the structure. I was immediately conducted to the Holy Sepulchre, which is a square edifice, standing directly under a large cupola; you enter through a narrow door, leaving your shoes without, and first come into a small chamber, in the middle of which is a stone on which one of the angels, who guarded the sepulchre, is said to have sat. Hence you pass to a second small chamber, on the left of which is the sepulchre itself, which is every where incrustated with marble; and before it is a painting of the resurrection.

This sepulchre was originally hewn in a rock, but at present, together with Mount Calvary, it is entirely levelled; and on this area was built the above mentioned church. Over the sepulchre they hang about fifty silver lamps; likewise a charger of gold belonging to the Greeks; but none of any other community, except the fathers of the Holy Land, or of the Latin church, are allowed to celebrate mass in the sepulchre, though the entrance is free to all who pay the usual toll. During Easter the outside of this sepulchre is covered with curious tapestry, on which are rich embroideries of our Saviour's passion and resurrection. Over the structure, within which the sepulchre stands, is a small cupola, supported by twelve porphyry stones, which at this joyful season were covered with rich silks and hangings. The *outside of this structure* is little else than *mishapen stones*, with some contemptible pillars

by way of ornament. In a word, there is neither beauty, regularity, nor grandeur, in the whole edifice. On the top are several holes or apertures for giving vent to the smoke, occasioned by so great a number of lamps continually burning, and which cause a very suffocating heat; especially when a large number of people are collected together at the same time; though the second chapel, containing the Holy Sepulchre itself, will hold only six or eight persons. Leaving this church we retired to the convent of the ecclesiastics, who officiate here; but, it being Good Friday, our supper proved a very sober repast, consisting only of sallad, eggs, very indifferent salt fish, and bread the monks indeed contented themselves with bread and sallad only. During the whole supper one of the fathers read an excellent moral lecture out of an Italian book; and when the repast was over the father-guardian retired with the other ecclesiastics to dress himself for performing the duties of the night; a few of us strangers in the mean time visited with our guide the chapel of the Apparition, which was very beautifully ornamented. Soon after sun set all the candles were put out, the doors locked, and one of the ecclesiastics preached in Italian from these words: "In this dark night," &c. The reason for putting out all the lights is, that they think darkness better adapted to their worship, especially on this solema occasion.

Sermon being over the candles were again lighted, and a wax taper given to every one of the audience, in order to assist at the procession now to be performed. Each of the ecclesiastics had also a book, containing the hymns appointed to be sung in every consecrated place. At the head of this procession was carried a large cross, with the figure of a man nailed to it, streaked with blood; and the sculpture so finely executed that it represented, in a very lively manner, the melancholy spectacle of our Saviour's hanging on the cross. This was followed by several other crosses. The father-guardian, wearing his mitre and carrying the crozier, assisted at this procession, as is common on all great festivals.

We next passed by the place where our Saviour is said to have appeared to Mary; and where he shewed himself in the dress of a gardener to Mary Magdalene. We also passed several chapels, as that of the Imprisonment of St. Longinus, &c. and at length stopped before the chapel of the division of the Apparel. At each the proper hymns were sung, and the prayers read; and here an ecclesiastic preached a sermon in French, suitable to the occasion. This divine was at that time president of the Holy Sepulchre, the next place in dignity to that of the guardian, but which is held only for three months; for the fathers of the Holy Land, consisting chiefly of three nations, *France, Spain, and Italy*, must be

equally represented; to effect which the Scutturis, as it is called, consists of the father-guardian, an Italian, the father procurator a Spaniard; and of three other fathers who have no dignity, and therefore called discretia. A president is every three months chosen of a different nation; and who, in the absence or sickness of the father-guardian, supplies his place.

The next stop was at the chapel of the pillar called Improperii. And here another French sermon was delivered, a monk standing by the preacher, holding in his hand a large cross.

We now passed by the chapel of St. Helena, near which is another dedicated to the invention of the cross, and said to have been built on the very spot where the true cross was found. We were now arrived at the foot of Mount Calvary, and all ascended it barefooted, leaving our shoes at the bottom of the steps. Here the French vicar preached before the altar, and stood on the very spot where our Saviour is said to have been nailed to the cross. Now the large cross, which had hitherto been carried at the head of the procession, was fixed in the hole where the true cross stood, while our Redeemer suffered on it.

We next heard a very elegant and pathetic discourse in Italian; after which two ecclesiastics, one representing Nicodemus and the other Joseph of Arimathæa, approached the cross, with the greatest marks of veneration, in order to take down the body; but previously crowned



it with a silver diadem, representing the crown of thorns; when every one climbed up to kiss the statue. The ecclesiastics now, in order to make a great show of devotion, began all to smite heavily on their breasts, and every one applied himself with alacrity to draw the nails out of the cross.

The statue was so artfully formed, that, when the nails were drawn out of the hands and feet, every part of it was moveable; and represented exactly a human corpse, except in its size, which was considerably less than that of a man. The place indeed was not high enough to admit a cross of the natural dimensions.

This ceremony I have described with all possible accuracy. It was instituted to inflame the devotion of all who visit the holy places, by conveying the most lively idea of the passion of our Saviour.

Now the two ecclesiastics, representing Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa, wrapped up the statue in fine linen, on which was embroidered the arms of Jerusalem; being a red cross, surrounded with four smaller ones.

This being performed we descended from Mount Calvary, greatly affected with the solemn manner in which the hymns were chanted; the statue was also brought down to the stone of unction where our Saviour's body is said to have been anointed. Here the father-guardian anointed the supposed body with fragrant balsams, while the ecclesiastics perfumed the stone

and audience with the smoke of their incense. After which one of them preached in Arabic. The whole procession now followed this anointed statue to the Holy Sepulchre, into which the representatives of Nicodemus and Joseph carried it, the father-guardian also going in with them. Here a Spanish ecclesiastic delivered a sermon in his own language, which put a period to this mournful ceremony; the whole having lasted till after midnight. In the mean time the supposed body was not left in the tomb, but at the conclusion of the procession carried back to the convent. A vast concourse of people of various nations were assembled to see this ceremony; but the Turks took care to keep good order.

Being unwell I was not able to visit other places of note round Jerusalem for some weeks. In the mean time the day arrived when the pilgrims go to wash in the Jordan; and, being recovered, I resolved to bear them company. We went out by St. Stephen's gate, and soon found ourselves at the foot of the Mount of Olives, leaving on the right hand the brook of Cedron, which at that time was dry; and also the valley of Jehosophat. At a short distance from the latter place, we had a view of Bethany, which is now but a mean village.

A little farther we descended a very difficult mountain, and halted a while at a well, called the Well of the Apostles; from a tradition that, when wearied in the duties of their important

vocation, they used to retire hither for repose; a supposition not wholly incredible. Near this well are some ruinous and forsaken edifices, which in stormy weather serve as a shelter for the herdsmen and their cattle. We found the road here rugged and difficult, it being mostly desert; though some tokens still pretty plainly shewed that it had formerly been in a state of cultivation.

In several places, both on the summits of the mountains and in the plains, we met with ruinous buildings raised in former times by the Christians; and we came to the mountainous waste, commonly called the Desert, where our Saviour was carried by the Spirit to be tempted of Satan. Nothing is here visible but bare stones and scanty herbage; wherever the eye turns it meets only stupendous crags and wild rocks, and frequently abysses of a frightful depth. Our descent from these mountains into the plain of Jericho was so difficult that we were all obliged to alight.

As we approached the place of our encampment, we were bid to observe on the left hand a certain mountain, which is allowed to be that where our Saviour spent some time in retirement; this excited my curiosity, and I determined to go and survey it. This mountain is here called Quarantena, it being pretended that *the Messiah, on his coming out of Jordan, retired hither fasting forty days and nights. In the ascent I first passed by a large cave, and*

further on came to a chapel hewn with great skill and labour in the rock, but at present the inside is completely ruinous. St. Helena passes for the foundress of it; but the figure and construction did not appear to me of so ancient a date; and some remains of paintings on the wall were manifestly of the Grecian taste. The view downwards has something extremely horrid, being a wild precipice without one pleasing object intermixed with it. In the caves are still seen some cells, formerly the habitations of hermits, retiring hither for penance, and as it were to imitate the Saviour in his supernatural fast. These hermits sometimes come down and live on the benevolence of the Arabians, which must have been small indeed; for the daily sustenance of these Arabians would be a continual penance and fast for even monks themselves. With so little is nature satisfied! On the summit of this mountain is likewise another small ruined chapel, situated on the spot where Satan is generally supposed to have carried our Saviour and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof, saying, "all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

The summit of this mountain being one of the highest in the neighbourhood, I had a fine prospect over the circumjacent countries, particularly the plain of Jericho, and the river Jordan winding through it, till it falls into the Salt or Dead Sea, which the naked eye easily di-

covers eastward. This extended prospect is terminated by the high mountains of Arabia Petrea on the other side of Jordan. Having descended, I left on the right hand a large and half ruined aquaduct, which formerly must have been of great use to the city of Jericho; and on the left hand saw the remains of a church and convent, but concerning which I could not get the least information. A little farther I observed several arches, which to all appearance made part of a church.

About a hundred paces further I came to a most delightful halting place, near a fine spring, under the shadow of a large and beautiful tree, covering a basin from which issued a rivulet. It is here called Elisha's Spring; but Pliny gives it the name of Calliroe, that is, beautiful stream; and Ætius terms it Fons Solis, or the Sun's Spring. The water is clear, cool, and issues in a very copious stream. I now passed through very extensive corn lands, a little beyond which we came in sight of the famous city of Jericho; but at present it is so far from retaining any thing of its former lustre, that one would question whether there ever had been a city or town thereabouts; all at present visible being some hovels of dried mud, inhabited by husbandmen and shepherds. Here is indeed a stone house of two stories, said to have been *that of Zaccheus* the publican; and which the *fathers of the Holy Land* could not pass without *reading a portion of the Gospel, and singing*

hymns; though at present it is applied to the meanest uses,—serving as a stable for cattle. A small distance from hence I arrived at the place where the pilgrims had pitched their tents for the night.

In the valley of Jericho, where are many natural curiosities, there is a thorny bush which bears a fruit that has some similitude to an unripe walnut. From this fruit the natives obtain an extract, ~~used~~ internally for bruises, and externally applied to wounds. Its reputation is so great that it is preferred to the balm of Gilead and the wood olive; its outward coat is green, like the common olive, but when taken off, a nut of a woody substance appears. It is about the thickness of an almond shell, and is commonly called the locust tree; the shell when dried is eaten, and has a very agreeable taste; these are thought to be the “locusts” on which John the Baptist fed, and not the animal of that name, as many have supposed.

When the shades of the evening began to fall, the more affluent pilgrims reposed in tents, and the poorer sort stretched themselves on the ground in the open air; about four hours before day break they were all in motion to recommence the march. It is impossible to describe the scene that was now presented: camels, horses, mules, and donkeys, mixed in the utmost confusion,—women and children screamed in hideous concert as they hung dangling in baskets at the sides of camels, each in danger

every instant of coming in contact with her neighbour, and keeping her lungs in active exercise to avoid the consequences of such a catastrophe. At one moment in utter darkness, at the next the fires suddenly blazing, shone full on the confusion of the scene, and gave it a most striking effect. The Turkish guards were flying in every direction, endeavouring to keep the people in a body, who seemed on their part just as anxious to separate. At length, however, matters were arranged, and pursuing our march, we arrived at the Jordan by break of day. The principal part of the pilgrims were Greeks, and the scene exhibited at the Jordan was one of great solemnity; the ardent desire they displayed to plunge into the stream was to me powerfully impressive; and though we may call them fanatics, as indeed they are, yet their mistaken zeal deserves our pity rather than our contempt.

The Greeks and Armenians, both men, women, and children, rush into the river with the greatest rapture; and some who affected a more than ordinary devotion, have water poured on their heads, in memory of our Saviour's baptism. Most of them go into the river in a new gown; this they immediately fold up wet as it is, and on their return to the valley of Jericho open and dry it. After it has been laid on the stone of unction at Jerusalem, and there rubbed with a kind of wax, it is carefully preserved to serve the purpose of a shroud, super-

stitiously believing it will secure them from the torments of hell. After they have enjoyed the satisfaction of bathing, the pilgrims fill bottles and small casks with the water, and cut down large boughs and even trees, growing on the banks of the river, as relics and proofs that they have visited that celebrated stream. The water of the Jordan is of a very pleasant taste, but this will not satisfy the pilgrims; they pretend that it will never corrupt, having derived that virtue from our Saviour's baptism; this fallacy, however, is abundantly refuted by all experience. If filtered and put into clean bottles, it will indeed preserve its virtue for a considerable time; but without these precautions, like other water, it soon becomes unfit for use.

Others go yet farther, and firmly maintain, that, since our Saviour's baptism, it has acquired a sanctifying virtue; and hence chiefly arises the ceremony of bathing. From the same motive also the Latin Christians of Jerusalem sent some of this sacred water as a present to the king of Poland, in acknowledgment of his generous regard for their interests at the treaty of Zananon.

The place in the Jordan where the pilgrims wash, is supposed to be the spot where the Israelites passed the river; where the manna ceased to fall; where the Hebrews tasted the first fruits of the promised land; where Naaman was cured of his leprosy; and, lastly, where Jesus Christ was baptized by his illustrious



forerunner John the Baptist. I cannot express what I felt at the first sight of this ancient stream ; it brought to my recollection, not only its ancient renown and one of the most celebrated names which the most exquisite poetry ever confided to the memory of man, but also presented to my view the theatre of our Saviour's miracles. Judea is the only country in the world that revives in the traveller's mind the remembrance of human affairs combined with celestial things ; producing by this combination ideas and feelings which no other country can excite. The heart is at first filled with profound disgust, but when passing from desert to desert, boundless space opens before you ; this disgust gradually wears off, and you experience a secret awe, which far from sinking the spirits, invigorates the mind and elevates the genius. No ideas are so sublime as those that are derived from the contemplation of the perfection of Deity displayed in the greatness of his works ; these being naturally boundless in extent, surpass the circumscribed limits of our conception, and produce, by their infinitude, an elevation and dignity of intellectual impression which is often most forcibly felt, yet beyond the power of language to define or describe. This effect is caused by such great masses being thrown together without regularity or order, producing a wild kind of grandeur that vividly operates on the mind. These sensations are *accompanied with a mixture of delight and awe,*

that by no means produces those pleasing emotions which originate from the contemplation of objects merely beautiful; and yet gratifies the feelings by inspiring a more refined and superior perception; by raising the ideas beyond the level of the rules prescribed by art, which will ever be found contracted and circumscribed when opposed to the boundless operations of nature.

Extraordinary appearances every where proclaim a country teeming with prodigies. The scorching sun, the towering eagle, the barren fig-tree,—all the poetry, all the pictures of scripture are found here. Every name revives the recollection of something significant, every grotto indicates something symbolical, and every hill suggests the voice of a prophet. Here the fundamental laws of the universe have sometimes been suspended, and at other times reversed; and not only the current of Jordan but the course of nature irresistibly controlled. Here we tread upon enchanted or rather upon consecrated ground, where astonishment and awe are awakened at every turn; rivers that are now dried up, rocks that are rent in sunder, sepulchres half opened, attest the miracle. Throughout these sacred regions the mind glows with a holy ardour. Recollections the most affecting and prospects the most sublime are awakened by every object; the whole face of nature, speaking with a voice which though frequently gainsayed cannot be disproved, attests

which at times burst spontaneously from the ground. And such springs or wells, the chief interpreter of the convent told us, he had seen at a short distance from the shore of this sea; but at present they were in general dried up, and the water by no means good.

The banks of the Jordan are here thickly covered with reeds, willows, and various shrubs; serving as an asylum for birds of prey and wild beasts. We now passed near some small white eminences on the left, and after travelling about an hour and a half, arrived at the Dead Sea.

The lake *Asphaltites*, or the Dead Sea, is called in Jewish writings the sea of Sodom, the Salt Sea, and the Sea of the Desert. The name *Asphaltites* was given to it on account of the great quantity of *asphaltus* or *bitumen* found on its borders. It was called the Dead Sea because it was supposed that no creature could exist in it on account of its excessive saltiness.

It has been generally understood that this lake was formed by the overthrow of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, which for their detestable crimes, perished in an extraordinary conflagration; and it is worthy of remark, that even at present clouds of smoke are often seen to issue from it, and new crevices are formed on its banks. According to the tradition of the inhabitants, the valley of the lake was formerly peopled by thirteen flourishing cities which were destroyed by a volcano; and this account *is further confirmed* by the ruins which travellers

have discovered on the western border. The eruptions have long since ceased, but earthquakes, which usually succeed them, still continue to be felt at intervals

The excessive saltiness of the water, which far exceeds that of the sea, deprives it of vegetable and animal productions, and occasions that deadly aspect which reigns on the borders of the lake; and so heavy are its waves, that the most impetuous wind fails to ruffle them. The origin of the mineral by which it is impregnated is easily discovered; for, on the southwest shore, there are mines of fossil salt imbedded in the sides of the mountains; which from time immemorial have supplied the neighbouring Arabs. The valley which encloses the Dead Sea displays a soil resembling the bottom of the sea, when the water has long retired from its bed;—a beach covered with salt, dry mud, and moving sand, furrowed as it were by the waves. Here and there, throughout this inanimate tract, stunted shrubs with difficulty vegetate; their leaves are covered with the salt which has nourished them, and their bark has a smoky smell and taste. Instead of villages you perceive confused heaps of stones, and through the middle of this valley flows a discolored river, which seems to creep reluctantly towards the pestilential lake by which it is engulfed. Its course amidst the sands can only be distinguished by the willows and reeds that skirt its banks; and the Arab lies in am-

bush among these reeds to attack the traveller and to plunder the pilgrim. A wide extent of desert country here lies open to the eye, and exhibits an imposing but gloomy picture: the prospect is altogether immense, but wild and desolate, and the shades of night gathering on the mountains give a degree of melancholy grandeur to this wilderness, even in its most gloomy forms.

Such is the scene presented by that land once famous for the benedictions and the curses of heaven! This river is the Jordan! This lake is the Dead Sea! It appears brilliant, but the guilty cities entombed in its bosom seem to have poisoned its waters. No fish inhabits its dark abysses,—no vessel cuts its waves,—no birds warble on its treeless, barren shores! The gloomy silence that reigned around when night had fallen, became oppressively painful. It was not that pleasing, pensive melancholy, that steals over the mind when viewing these wonders by light of day, it was not fear nor dread,—but the imagination, wrought on by the solitude and impressiveness of the place, wandered back to ancient days; and deeply mused on the mutability of human affairs.

Amidst these wrecks of nature, the mind is powerfully borne forward to that period when the commissioned archangel, shall lift his hand to heaven, and swear by the almighty Name that time shall be no longer! How amazingly great *and awful* is the description of that tremendous

day. All that is gloomy or beautiful in the atmosphere, all that is striking or magnificent in every element, is taken in to heighten the great idea: yet nothing is disproportionate; but an uniform air of ineffable majesty, enlarges, exalts, and ennobles the whole. Observe the aspect of this august personage:—all the brightness of the sun shines in his countenance, and all the rage of unfading fire burns in his feet. See his apparel:—the clouds compose his robes, and the drapery of the sky floats upon his shoulders: the rainbow forms his diadem, and that which compasseth the heavens with a glorious circle is the ornament of his head. Behold his attitude:—one foot stands on the ocean, and the other rests on the land, the wide extended earth and the world of waters serve as pedestals for those mighty columns. Consider the action:—his hand is lifted up to the height of the stars, he speaks and the regions of the firmament echo with the mighty accents as the midnight deserts resound with the lion's roar; the artillery of the skies is discharged at the signal; a peal of seven-fold thunder spreads the alarm, and prepares the world to receive his orders to finish all, and gives the highest grandeur as well as the utmost solemnity to the representation. Hear the decree that issues from his mouth:—he swears by him that liveth for ever. In whatever manner so majestic a person shall express himself, he cannot fail of commanding universal

attention; but when he confirms his speech by a most sacred and inviolable oath, we are not only wrapt in silent suspense, but overwhelmed with the profoundest awe. He swears that time shall be no longer! Was ever voice so full of terror, so big with wonder! It proclaims not the fall of empires, but the final period of things; it strikes off the wheels of nature, bids ages and generations cease to roll, and with one potent word consigns a whole world over to dissolution.

At night here the heat is oppressive; our encampment was on the border of the lake, and after sun-set not a breath of air was to be felt. The moon, rising at two in the morning, brought with her a strong breeze, which, without cooling the air, produced a slight undulation on the bosom of the lake. The waves charged with salt soon subsided by their own weight, and scarcely broke against the shore. A dismal sound proceeded from the lake of death, resembling the stifled clamours of the people engulfed in its waters. The dawn now appeared on the opposite mountains of Arabia. The Dead Sea, and the valley of the Jordan, glowed with brilliant tints; but this rich appearance only served to heighten the desolation of the scenery.

We saw here a kind of jetty, or prominence, which appears to have been a heap of stones, *from time to time* thrown up by the sea; but

it is a current opinion here, that they are part of the ruins of one of the towns which are buried under it. We were indeed shewn a place where the sea had retreated more than in any other part. And here some think it probable, that one of the five cities which were the objects of this terrible devastation formerly stood. We also found along the shore several fragments of large trees, which had been washed up by the sea, and had all the appearance of great antiquities. Along the shore we also picked up several pieces of a kind of black flint, which burnt in the fire without any diminution of their size, though they lost considerably in their weight, and at the same time emitted an insupportable stench. They are used in this country as fumigations for the plague.

I readily give credit to the report that there are no fish to be found throughout the whole lake, and indeed so far from seeing any, I could not discern any one thing that had the resemblance of a scale or shell. And as to the "fruit of a very sightly appearance, and which never cometh to ripeness," mentioned in the Apocrypha, and particularly in the book of Wisdom, x. 7, as growing here, I shall only relate what we were told by a servant of the convent, who said that he had seen several, and had them in his hands, though I cannot pretend to vouch for his veracity, having never seen any myself. This fruit, according to his description, is of the size of a common apple.



grows on a low tree, and its form is very beautiful ; though in fact it has only the appearance of a fruit, for upon opening it you find nothing but ashes.

We cannot boast of having seen in this lake any of those remains of which some travellers give us such striking descriptions ; or any traces of cities, which geographers have so improperly placed in their maps ; neither could we obtain the least certainty concerning the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was transformed ; some saying, it must be in the sea, under the water ; others placed it in Arabia Petrea, on the other side of the sea ; and others again assured us, that it was still standing about three miles from the place where we then were ! but the most probable opinion is, that it is no longer in being.

We were also told, that about three miles further were whole mountains of a very white and good salt, considerable quantities of which were carried by the Arabians to Jerusalem ; and the vulgar are possessed with a notion, that a black cloud continually hangs over this sea, to denote the wrath of the Almighty ; though when we were there the sun shone very bright, and we had a free and extensive view.

To the north it has the plain of Jericho and the Jordan, on the south the Red Sea ; eastward Arabia Petrea, and westward the mountains of Judea. Its breadth from east to west, is about six or seven leagues ; but north to south

is by some said to be twenty-four or thirty ; so much is certain, that it extends farther than the eye can reach.

We set out on our return over the little hills and eminences, which in going lay on our left, and made haste to the plain where on our right hand we saw a church and convent of Hieronymites ; but both in a ruinous condition. Travelling on some way farther we came again to our caravan, and saw the Pacha, with all his attendants, under a tent, placed on a rising ground ; facing it was another, and betwixt the two tents the pilgrims were obliged to pass one by one, and pay the caphar, whilst guards were placed in all the passages and round the whole camp, to seize any pilgrim who should attempt to steal away without paying. The Pacha was a person in years, with a long grey beard, and of a very amiable countenance and behaviour, saluting every one who passed by with a nod of his head, which was returned by the pilgrims, with a low inclination of the whole body, and one of the hand, laid on the breast.

Having left the plain of Jericho at break of day with the Pacha, we took the same way as in coming from Jerusalem, but entered the city by another gate, that of Zion.

## CHAPTER V.

## ACCOUNT OF SEVERAL HOLY PLACES

IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF JERUSALEM; AS  
BETHANY, THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, MOUNT  
ZION, THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE, AND  
THE SEPULCHRE OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL.

On going out of the city, through St. Stephen's Gate, we saw near it a large reservoir, quite dry, called the Piscina Probatica, or sheep-pool. It is nearly an hundred paces in length, and sixty in breadth, and extends almost to the place where the front of Solomon's temple stood. St. Stephen's Gate is so called from the first martyr Stephen having been stoned at a small distance from it; before which it was called the Sheep Gate. Near it the Turks have their sepulchres, on one of which we saw an instance of that absurd custom of hiring women to mourn for the dead. A little further from this gate they pretend to show the exact spot where St. Stephen expired, and even insist that the impression of his knees and shoulders are still *imprinted* on the rock. Beyond this, on our way to Bethany, we were shewn the place where the fig-tree grew which withered at our Saviour's *imprecation*. Near it are the remains of Simon

the leper's house ; and farther up the mountain the ruins of the castle of Lazarus, who is here said to have been the proprietor and lord of Bethany.

At some distance we descended twenty-eight steps into Lazarus' sepulchre, which is hewn in the rock, but greatly injured by time. The first compartment is a small chamber, and from it a passage leading to another, in which is an altar, said to stand on the very spot whence Lazarus was raised by our Saviour ; and where still lies the very stone he ordered to be removed from the grave. Mass is celebrated twice a year on the altar. This sepulchre lies in Bethany, at that time a town of note, but at present a mean village, inhabited only by poor peasants. A little farther they shewed us the foundation of Martha and Mary's house, with a fine well hewn in the rock ; likewise a stone on which our Saviour is said to have rested till the two sisters were informed of his coming.

The next place we visited was the Mount of Olives, and in our journey passed through Bethpage, from whence our Saviour made his triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. In ascending the Mount of Olives, we saw a fragment of a pillar, said to be erected as a memorial of the place where the angel Gabriel foretold to the blessed virgin the violent death her Son was to suffer.

*Having reached the top of the mountain a*

large door was opened, through which we entered into a spacious place, where the Turks, at the expence of the European ecclesiastics, have built a small mosque in the form of a dome. Here we observed a certain stone, on which they pretend is the impression of one of our Saviour's feet, it being the stone on which he stood at his ascension. There was, they say, originally the impression of both his feet, but the Turks it seems, have carried away one part of the stone, which they still keep in the mosque built on the ancient site of Solomon's temple. Here was formerly a church, but now all that remains is the fragment of a pillar, on which it is pretended the Apostles sat when our Saviour was taken up into heaven; and to this day the pillar is called the pillar of the men of Galilee.

In our descent from the mountain we saw the place said to be that where our Saviour, surveying Jerusalem, was so affected for the calamities of its approaching desolation, that he wept over it, and broke out into the pathetic exclamation of pity for its miseries recorded in the Gospel. Not far from hence is a pillar, said to have been erected on the place where our Saviour foretold the last judgment, and near it the place where he composed what is called the Lord's prayer. We were also led to a cave, supported by twelve arches, and were assured that the Apostles here drew up the twelve *articles of the creed*. A little lower we entered

a large cave divided into various compartments, in which were several sepulchres, commonly called the sepulchres of the prophets.

Here indeed we stood upon holy ground, and the question might reasonably be proposed to Jew, Christian, or Mahometan, whether in reference to the history of their respective nations, it be possible to attain a more interesting place of observation. So commanding is the view of Jerusalem afforded in this situation, that the eye roams over all the streets and around the walls, as if surveying a plan or model of the city. The most conspicuous object is the mosque, erected upon the site of the temple of Solomon. This edifice may perhaps be regarded as the finest specimen of the architecture among the Saracens which exists in the world.

A spectator standing upon the Mount of Olives, and looking down upon the space enclosed by the walls of Jerusalem in their present state, as they have remained since their restoration in the sixteenth century, must be convinced that, instead of covering two conspicuous hills, Jerusalem now occupies but one eminence, namely, that of Mount Moriah; where of old the temple stood, and where the famous mosque of Omar is now situated. It is probable that the whole of Mount Zion has been excluded, and that the mountain covered by ruined edifices, whose base is perforated by ancient sepulchres, and separated from Mount Moriah by a deep trench, extending as far as

the fountain of Siloa towards the eastern valley, is in fact that eminence which was surrounded by the "bulwarks," towers, and regal buildings of the house of David.

A few days after we made another tour, going out at Bethlehem gate, near which formerly stood that magnificent church built by St. Helena, which she dedicated to the twelve Apostles, but the Turks have now converted it into a mosque.

The church is said to have been erected on the very place where our Saviour ate the passover with his disciples, and appeared to them after his resurrection. St. James also was here afterwards consecrated bishop of Jerusalem. This is likewise said to be the place where the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost, descended on the Apostles in the form of cloven tongues of fire. Here too St. Matthias was chosen one of the twelve; and St. Stephen with six others appointed deacons; and thither the Apostles fled from king Agrippa.

The inhabitants likewise affirm that the counsel was held in this place, and that here too, on the day of Pentecost, the first mass was said, Peter and John officiating. Near this place, where our Saviour celebrated the passover is said to be still remaining the sepulchre of *king Manasseh*; and at a little distance they *show the place where they pretend the lamb was roasted for the last supper.*

*Without the church is shewn the spot where*

the Apostles took leave of each other, when they separated to preach the Gospel in the different parts of the world. Here we likewise saw some fragments of the foundation of a church, said to be built on the place where the Virgin's house stood; and though several judicious persons affirm that she was conveyed by St. John to Ephesus, and there died at a very advanced age; yet it is the general opinion that she breathed her last in Jerusalem, and lies buried very near the city. They here desired us to take notice of several foundations of the city of David, and the canals hewn in the rock, which are still entire. On a mountain near this place stands a village called Mal Council, from the high priest Caiphas assembling the chief men of the Jews there, in order to deliberate on the best measures for putting Christ to death.

In the valley which we next passed through we saw several ancient sepulchres of the Jews, originally hewn in the rock, but in a great measure destroyed by the Romans. Strangers are also shewn here, Il Lampo Santo, the Holy Field, called in scripture Aceldama, or the field of blood; purchased with the thirty pieces of silver for which Judas betrayed his master. Here are several caves of the same kind, many of which the peasants have taken possession of; so that those very places intended as perpetual receptacles for the dead, are now the abodes of the living. In one of these cavern



are several remains of paintings, which inclined me to think it might formerly have been a chapel, and in it is still an altar, where mass used to be said. This rock is every where hewn into chambers or apartments, and, according to tradition, eight of the Apostles concealed themselves here during the trial and crucifixion of their master.

We now descended into the valley of Jehosaphat, where not only the Turks, and other eastern people, but also the fathers of the Latin church firmly believe that there will be a general gathering of all the people of the earth at the day of judgment, taking the prophecy of Joel in a literal sense. The first thing we saw here was Nehemiah's Pit; where, according to tradition, he concealed the sacred fire when the Jews were carried away captive to Babylon, and where, according to the second book of Maccabees, it was found after their return from the Babylonish captivity. It is now a well, but when we were there the water in it was very low; though sometimes it overflows in such a manner as to lay the vale under water, which occasions great rejoicings among the Turks and Arabians, as being a certain prognostic of a very plentiful year.

The next remarkable place shewn us was *that* where the prophet Isaiah is said to have *suffered martyrdom*; but, instead of the cedar *which* formerly stood there, it is denoted by a *white mulberry tree*. This valley is watered by

the brook Kedron or Cedron, which was however at this time quite dry. It is also said, that near this place Solomon's splendid gardens were situated; but at present nothing seems to flourish but a few wild berries. At a little distance from hence we came to the Pricon Natatoria, or the swimming pool of Silo, or Siloam, where our Saviour gave sight to one who had been blind from his birth. Its length is about thirty feet, the breadth about twelve, and the depth sixteen. The water is conveyed to it by a subterraneous aqueduct from a spring, where the holy virgin is said frequently to have washed her hands; and accordingly the Turks have built an oratory here. Facing this pool is the village of Siloe, the residence of Solomon's concubines; and here we saw the cave where the unnatural sacrifices were offered to the idol Moloch. Somewhat higher is the Mountain of Offence, or Infamy, so called from the high places built there by Solomon, when his wives, availing themselves of the imbecility of his age, seduced him to idolatry. Farther on the declivity of the mountain we came to the burying place of the modern Jews. They pay a sequin daily to the Turks for this privilege, whether they bury any dead or not, and great numbers are known to come from very distant places to have the satisfaction of dying here; and others *bring the bones of their parents or ancestors.* Near the top of this mountain the people pre

tor of the Holy Land caused to be blocked up; the Turks throwing all kinds of ordure in it. Another entrance has however been made, through which we passed into the cave. This formerly was a church, and has still a most beautiful pavement; but, to secure it from the violence of the Turks, the fathers have covered it with earth. Here are two altars, and on that against the wall the angel who brought the cross and cup to our Saviour is said to have rested during the time of his prayer. Here on the Wednesday in Passion week the fathers of the Holy Land celebrate mass and scourge themselves. They also shewed us the place where the Virgin Mary saw St. Stephen stoned.

We next visited what is called the church of the sepulchre of the Holy Virgin, formerly of singular magnificence, but at present under ground, and we were obliged to descend near fifty ruined steps to it. On the right hand of these steps they shew two altars, erected over the graves of St. Joachim and St. Anne, nearly related to the Holy Virgin, and on the left that of St. Joseph, the reputed father of our Saviour.

In a small chapel we were shewn the Holy Virgin's sepulchre, which is incrustured with marble, and near it are a great number of glass lamps continually burning. This sacred place belongs to the Latins, who alone have the privilege of celebrating mass in it, which they perform with great solemnity on the feast of the anniversary of the Holy Virgin, though the

Greeks and Armenians, Coptics and Syrians, have likewise their altars, with lamps burning before them, which, indeed, is very necessary, the church being extremely dark. The Turks keep the keys of this subterraneous structure and have an oratory adjoining to it.

## CHAPTER VI.

JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM, AND THE CONVENT  
OF ST. JOHN, WITH ACCOUNTS OF OTHER  
HOLY PLACES.

When I left Jerusalem for Bethlehem, the intestine wars were being carried on among the villages. This hindered me from visiting the church and convent of the holy cross belonging to the Greeks; and which, according to them, stands on the spot where the tree grew, out of which our Saviour's cross was formed. On our departure from the city we passed near the supposed pool of Bethesda, or according to the writer of the *Itinerarium Hieroso Lipitanum*, Bethsaida; and on the right a ruined tower, where, according to the tradition, old Simeon resided, who with the infant Jesus in his arms, repeated that beautiful hymn recorded by St. Luke. The adjacent country is well cultivated, and exhibits a very beautiful appearance, barley growing in the rocks up to the very summits of the mountains. Proceeding along the foot of an eminence, on the top of which was a small village called Villa Salatia, about two hours more brought us to the convent of *St. John*. This structure exceeds every

thing in the Holy Land; it is a modern edifice, built after the plan of a Spanish ecclesiastic, at that time procurator of the Holy Land, but whose knowledge extended to things not immediately belonging to his profession. A stately church had been before erected here, but, being ruined by the enemies of Christianity, the remains of it now only serve as a stall for cattle.

At present the church is in the middle of the convent, and its cupola is particularly elegant; it has also a pavement of very beautiful mosaic or inlaid work; in it are three fine pieces of painting, one representing the Virgin's flight into Egypt, and the two others the angels Gabriel and Michael. But the most splendid part is a cave, said to have been the habitation of John the Baptist, during his austerities in the desert. It is now a chapel of surprising beauty; the very steps leading to it are of curious workmanship, and, besides a variety of other exquisite embellishments, its mosaic floor is universally admired.

Under the altar is shewn the very spot where John the Baptist is said to have been born, and on which is a marble star in raised work; and, projecting from the centre of it a small porphyry stone to indicate the place, and which the pilgrims kiss with great fervency. On the walls are some well executed basso relievos of the history of St. John; as the visit of Mary to Elizabeth, the birth of John, his preaching in the wilderness, his baptizing of Christ in the

Jordan, and his decollation; and in another chapel of this church, near the altar is a large stone on which it is pretended St. John stood when he preached. The village near the convent is by the christians called St. John, and by the Arabians Aincaireb, but little corresponds with its elegant convent, consisting only of a few wretched houses and huts inhabited by peasants. Formerly this was a city, though its name is not mentioned by the evangelists, who only say that Mary went from Nazareth to a city in the hill country to visit Elizabeth. In it are still seen the ruins of a large edifice, not improbably an ancient Christian church. This poor village afforded a sight which I had never seen before; in the evening the peasants were all busied in driving their cattle to the tops of their houses, to secure them from any incursions from the enemy.

On the top of a mountain, near the convent, are some ruins. These, according to the current tradition, are the remains of the tombs of the Maccabees, but the ecclesiastics who were with us assured us to the contrary, affirming that they were at a village called Modin; which indeed is agreeable to the first book of Maccabees.

The enemies of this village being masters of the tract, commonly called the wilderness, where St. John is said to have preached, and to have *led a life of exemplary mortification*, I judged it *not advisable* to go thither. This spot is called *the wilderness*, from its being hemmed in on

all sides betwixt the mountains; otherwise it is very well laid out, and produces corn, wine, and oil in great abundance. On the declivity of a mountain not far from the village of St. John, and about a short mile from the convent is, a house and cloister, said to be Elizabeth's country house, and the place where she resided when Mary came to visit her. Her town house, they further affirm, stood on the site of the convent of St. John; it being the common persuasion here that Zacharias was a person of such affluent circumstances as to have had both a town and country residence. In this ruined cloister is a spring which contributes to the fertility of the neighbouring valley, and supplies both the convent and village. The ancient city is now reduced to this mean village, though said formerly to have extended several miles.

Besides Arabians here are also several Christians, who, however, in some capacity or other are servants to the convent; and indeed the whole village may be said to be greatly benefited by the liberality of the fathers: and it must be owned that the relief of the neighbouring poor is one of the chief advantages of such religious communities.

I set out by moon-light, some time before break of day, for fear of meeting with enemies. After passing a very difficult mountain I entered a good road, leading along well cultivated hills and vales. From the top of a lofty eminence, I perceived a large plain with several tumbl



said to be the remains of the fortifications of the Israelites, thrown up against these hills. Crossing a tract of ploughed land I perceived some ruined stone work, placed as a memorial of the place where Moses's spies met with the large cluster of grapes mentioned in the thirteenth chapter of Numbers; but the Arabians have committed such ravages throughout the country, that at present there is not the least appearance of a vineyard. Not far from hence we saw St. Philip's spring; and near it a village of the same name. This passes for the place where Philip baptized the treasurer of Queen Candace, mentioned in the eighth chapter of the Acts. Not far from this spring are the ruins of a church, said to have been built by St. Helena. On entering the way leading to this spring, and which the virgin is said to have travelled in her flight to Egypt, the road is every where so rugged and stony that it seems next to impossible that it should have been passed by the treasurer's chariot. However this difficulty is removed by reflecting on the great probability there is that this road was then in a far better condition than it is at present; the Arabs, to whom it now belongs, completely neglecting the necessary repairs.

At some distance between two mountains, industriously cultivated, I came in sight of the *quarries* which furnished the stupendous pillars for the church at Bethlehem; and soon after left on the right hand a tolerably large village

called Boetese Clachi, or Boticella, inhabited by Greeks. The church which we only saw at a distance, is built in the form of a dome; and the neighbouring country has an aspect of plenty and industry, especially the valley of Sennacherib, so called from being the place where that prince's army was encamped when an angel destroyed in a single night, one hundred and fourscore and five thousand men. This vale is extensive, but so narrow that the disposition of a camp in those days must have been widely different from the modern method.

At last we came to the hill on which Bethlehem is built; Bethlehem is situated about six miles to the south-east of Jerusalem, and has been rendered for ever memorable as the birth-place of that adorable personage who is styled "The author and finisher of our faith." On entering the town one is deeply impressed with the facts of the Saviour's birth, the prophecies in which it was foretold, and the miracles by which it was attended. The appearance of an angelic host to the shepherds as they tended their flocks by night, and the triumphant notes they sung in commemoration of the great event, seem to possess a peculiar force, and an unusual beauty. "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will toward men," were all effected by the coming and death of Christ. *The facts too of the shepherds finding by divine direction the place where the infant lay, paying him their homage, and returning to tell th*

world the joyful tidings;—of the wise men guided by a star, travelling from the east to worship at his feet, acknowledge his supremacy, and present their offerings—offerings made to none but kings, and which had a direct reference to the character he sustained, and the object he contemplated:—all these concurring events crowd upon the mind and induce emotions of the most solemn and reverential kind.

The following morning I visited the church. Here the first Christians built an oratory over the supposed spot on which the incarnate God was discovered in a manger. Adrian ordered it to be demolished, and a statue of Adonis to be erected in its stead, but the empress Helena destroyed the idol and built a church on the same spot. This edifice is in the form of a cross, and the long nave or foot of the cross is adorned with forty-eight columns of the Corinthian order, in four rows; these columns are four feet six inches in diameter at the base, and eighteen feet high including the base and capital. The altar is dedicated to the wise men of the east, and on the pavement at the foot of the altar is a marble star, said to correspond with the point of the heaven in which the miraculous star that conducted the eastern magi stood still. Two spiral staircases, each composed of fifteen steps, open on the sides of the outer church, and conduct to a subterraneous one *supposed* to occupy the site of the original *stable*, and consequently to be the place of the

Saviour's nativity. It is of an irregular form, the length being thirty-seven feet six inches, the breadth eleven feet three inches, and the height nine feet, it is hewn out of the rock and the sides and the floor are covered with beautiful marble. The church receives no external light, but is illuminated by thirty-two lamps sent by different christian princes; at the farther end on the other side there is a spot marked with white marble, incrustated with jasper, and surrounded by a circle of silver rays, resembling those with which the sun is represented; this is intended to mark the spot where the child Jesus was born. The pictures which adorn this church are of the Italian and Spanish schools, representing the Virgin and child, the annunciation, the adoration of the wise men, the visit of the shepherds, and all the mysteries of the place; the drapery of the manger is of blue satin embroidered with silver. Incense is continually smoking before the cradle of the Saviour, and during the time of performing mass an elegant organ plays the finest and most pathetic tunes of the best Italian composers.

At a short distance to the southward of Bethlehem the famous fountains, pools, and gardens of Solomon are shewn. The pools are three in number, lying in a row, and so disposed that the waters of the uppermost fall into the second and those of the second into the third, they are of a quadrangular figure, equal in breadth, but differing in length, the breadth of each being

450 feet, and the length of the first 800 feet, of the second 1000, and of the third 1100; they are very deep and lined with plaster, and at the distance of about 700 feet is a fountain from which they receive their waters. On the eastward of the city the well of David is shewn, for the waters of which that monarch so passionately longed; and about two furlongs from this well are the remains of an aqueduct which anciently conveyed the waters of Solomon's pools to Jerusalem. After examining these remnants of antiquity in and around Bethlehem, I returned to Jerusalem. The first place of interest on the road is a large plain planted with olive trees, and said to be the same in which the shepherds received the glad tidings of Christ's nativity.

Near this is the shepherd's cave, and likewise the village where they lived, together with the ruins of a convent. A little farther eastward, we saw the place called Engedi, where David cut off a piece of Saul's robe; and near it a craggy mountain, commonly known by the name of the Franks' mountains. On the taking of Jerusalem by the Mahometans, they are said to have retired thither, and to have defended themselves during forty years; accordingly there are still on it several of their fortifications, and a way hewn through the rock leading up to the summit; but the greatest part of these works are now in ruins.

A little farther on our left hand, were several *Turkish burial places*, and among them a struc-

ture with a cupola, which has all the appearance of a recent building, and we were told it stands on the very spot where Rachel was interred. Soon after leaving, we passed near two ruined walls, said to be the remains of the house of the prophet Habakkuk ; some mention is made of this house of Habakkuk at the conclusion of the apocryphal story of Bel and the Dragon. A small distance hence our companion shewed us the place where the holy virgin is said to have rested herself under a turpentine tree, when she was bringing her infant to be presented to the Lord in the temple ; but this tree has long since been carried away by the prevalent fondness for relics, - and a fig-tree planted in its place ; it having been found by repeated trials that no turpentine tree would grow there. In the prosecution of our journey we passed the valley of Rephaim, which according to Josephus was in his time the common road.

This valley is celebrated for the signal victory gained by David over the Philistines ; it lies in the way from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, and is not above two hours ride from the former place.

## CHAPTER VII.

ACCOUNT OF SEVERAL SACRED PLACES  
WITHIN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM.

The first place our worthy ecclesiastics led us to was the convent of the Armenians; in the way we were shewn the place where our Saviour, after his resurrection, appeared to the two Marys, though this spot is called the *three Marys*. Here was formerly a church, but it has been succeeded by a mosque; and indeed in Palestine, the Turks have every where built mosques, or oratories, on all the places which the Christians account sacred. Not far from hence, we saw the place where St. Thomas's house stood, and this also, from a church, has been altered to a mosque. At last we came to the convent of the Armenians, the largest of any within the city of Jerusalem, though its several apartments are all in one story. At the time we were there above a thousand pilgrims were entertained in it. Over all the several apartments are elegant terraces, whence there is a prospect of the whole city. The church is very beautiful and splendid, and was originally built by the Spaniards, who dedicated it to St. James, the *supposed first bishop* of Jerusalem. This church

has two middle aisles, and in one a chapel prettily decorated, where our guide shewed us the spot on which John the Baptist was beheaded: it is enclosed and covered with a porphyry stone. On festivals the great altar of this church is loaded with an infinite variety of magnificent ornaments. Near it stands the Patriarch's throne, which besides the rich canopy over it, is every where curiously overlaid with tortoise shell and mother of pearl.

Hence we proceeded to the house of the high priest, Annas, now a small church belonging to the Armenians. Here is shewn the places where a brutal servant of the high priest struck our Saviour. Near the front of this church is an old olive tree railed in, or otherwise the pilgrims in great zeal would soon make an end of it, by carrying away pieces for relics; this it seems, being the tree, to which, as we were told, our Saviour was tied for some time by order of the high priest.

Our next visit was to St. Mark's house, or rather the church said to be built on the site of it; it is but small, and belongs to the Syrians. Hither it was where St. Peter first came after his miraculous release. Within it is a stone font, where we were assured that Apostle used to administer baptism, and round the church are convenient dwellings for the clergy belonging to it.

Further on we passed through the iron gate, *which* opened of itself to make way for Peter.



Acts xii. verse 10. Here are several frustums of pillars which are generally thought to indicate sacred places.

The following day we went to see the spot where Abraham was going to sacrifice his son Isaac; the way to it, from the church of the holy sepulchre, is through a little door on the left hand, and then up some steps to the terrace, where is an olive tree planted as a mark of the spot where the ram was caught, which Abraham offered instead of Isaac; and a little further we came to a small chapel in the possession of the Greeks, who here shew the identical place of the sacrifice. This chapel, though standing at a distance from the church, is likewise a part of Mount Calvary, or Golgotha; and the scene of Abraham's sacrifice was Mount Moriah, of which Calvary is an eminence, making part of it.

FINIS.







